

PARENTS GUIDE TO

movie messages: *The Jungle Book* animated (1967)

Seek and find worldviews
while having fun as a family

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY®

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The Jungle Book animated (1967)

BY **PLUGGED IN STAFF**
ILLUSTRATIONS BY
TOM BONSON

The entertainment industry bombards us with obvious and subtle messages. But we often don't recognize them as worldviews or notice how they skew our thinking. To help you and your family identify varying worldviews in the culture, play this game of Movie Messages while watching Disney's animated 1967 film *The Jungle Book*.

Note: For young children who aren't ready to play this game, a good way to start worldview training is with a casual comment like this: "That's cynicism. Our God is a God of hope, not distrust."





Directions:

1. Give every player a set of 10 worldview cards.
2. Watch *The Jungle Book* until you reach an incident on the game board. Then pause the movie.
3. Each player chooses a card that matches the worldview identified in the movie and places it facedown. Then players turn over their cards to reveal their answers.
4. The correct cards are removed from play. The cards deemed incorrect are returned to each player, and the movie continues.
5. This game doesn't cover every worldview in this movie. Players who have guessed wrong can catch up by calling out the correct worldview if it comes up again in the movie. (This can only be done with worldview cards that have been removed from play.)
6. The first player to get rid of his or her eight cards is the winner.

*__Fatalism__ and __Secular Humanism__ cards are not part of this movie's game board. If someone plays the Fatalism card and wants additional information, read Mark 10:27, where we're told that nothing's impossible with God. If someone plays the Secular Humanism card and wants additional information, remind players that God, not man, tells us what's wrong and right, and that He is sovereign over everything. Read Colossians 1:16-17 to reinforce those thoughts, where we learn about how God created all things on earth and in heaven.

To see if this animated film is right for your family, read *Plugged In*'s review.
FocusOnTheFamily.com/JungleBook

For the 2016 live-action remake, read *Plugged In*'s review at **FocusOnTheFamily.com/JungleBookLive**.

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ABSOLUTE MONARCHY features a leader who controls almost every aspect of a nation.



FATALISM is the belief that there's no point in taking action because events are predetermined.

Directions:

Cut out one set of either color or black-and-white cards for each player.



ALTRUISM prioritizes the happiness or safety of others above our own.



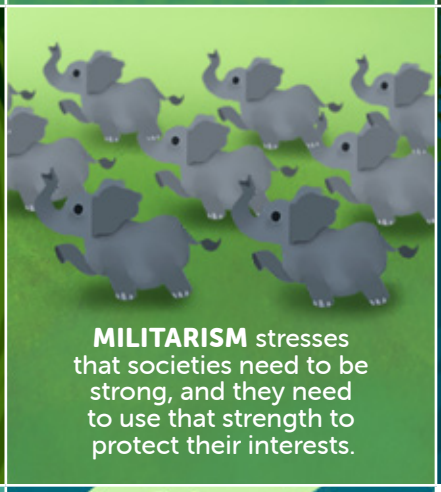
MACHIAVELLIANISM, named after the writer Niccolò Machiavelli, is about using and deceiving people for your own gain.



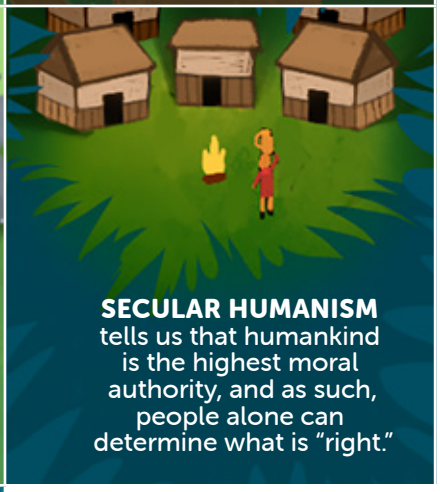
ETHICAL EGOISM contends that when we find what is best for ourselves, our actions are inherently right, even if they harm others.



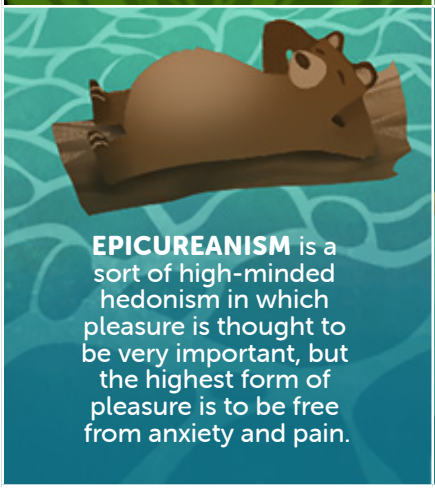
CYNICISM regards people and systems as untrustworthy.



MILITARISM stresses that societies need to be strong, and they need to use that strength to protect their interests.



SECULAR HUMANISM tells us that humankind is the highest moral authority, and as such, people alone can determine what is "right."



EPICUREANISM is a sort of high-minded hedonism in which pleasure is thought to be very important, but the highest form of pleasure is to be free from anxiety and pain.



MISANTHROPISM takes a dim view of humanity overall, often based on preconceptions of humanity's flaws.

MOVIE REVIEWS

For a review of *Iron Man* and other titles, visit **PluggedIn.com**, Focus on the Family's media review and discernment website.

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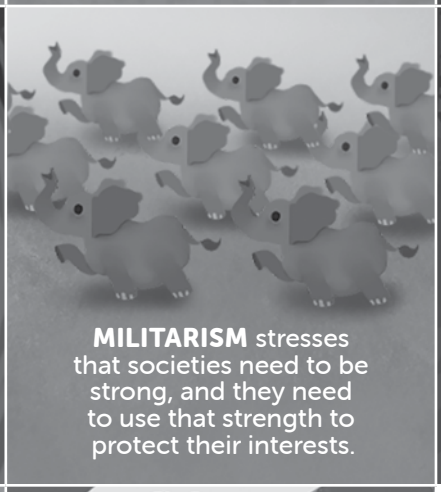
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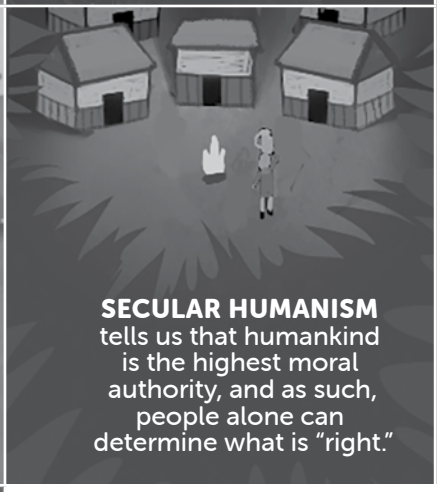
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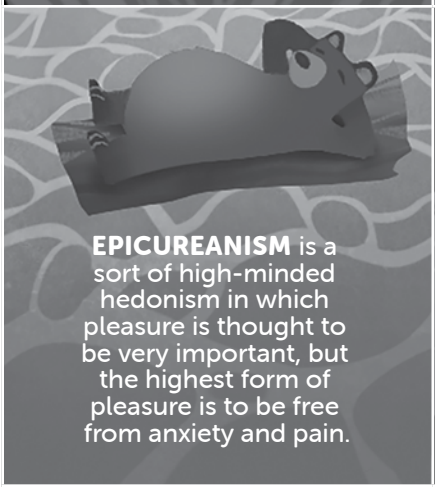
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II movie messages: *The Jungle Book*, animated (1967)

Movie stop 3:10

Bagheera, the panther, comes across a baby boy in the jungle. At first, he considers leaving the child and even says as the story's narrator, "If I'd known how deeply I was to be involved, I would've obeyed my first impulse and walked away."

What it is: Ethical egoism

We humans often look at the world and say, "It's a jungle out there." That means it's a harsh and unforgiving place where everyone is looking out for their own self-interests. In Bagheera's case, of course, his world really is a jungle, and human children like Mowgli have no chance of surviving without a lot of help. *Better to let nature take its course and not be bothered*, Bagheera thinks. The jungle encourages the creatures who live there to think *first* of themselves. If Bagheera walks away from Mowgli, he'd be doing what most jungle residents would do. But even though he leans toward putting his own needs first—which would be ethical egoism—he decides to follow his conscience and look out for the child.

Read: Philippians 2:4

"Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."

How to talk to tweens and teens

Ethical egoism seems like a *sensible* philosophy in the jungle, but as Bagheera knows, it's not necessarily the *right* one. God encourages us to look after the needs of others—and that's important in our own jungle, too. What situations can you think of at school or in your friend group that reflect ethical egoism?

What to say to young children

Bagheera almost leaves the baby, but he doesn't. What would you have done if you were Bagheera? Have you ever helped somebody who needed it? Have you ever walked away? The Bible tells us to help people in need. *These words are based on Hebrews 13:16.*

Movie stop 13:27

After Bagheera and Mowgli have a close encounter with the snake Kaa, a bunch of elephants enter the picture. The elephants, led by Col. Hathi, crash through the forest and make a huge amount of noise as they sing a marching song.

What it is: Militarism

In the song, the elephants tell us they're marching for the sake of marching. To ask why they're doing it "is a question rather droll / for to march and drill over field and hill / is a military goal." In other words, they don't need a *reason* to march. Marching is reason enough. Hathi, we learn, believes there's no higher purpose than being in the military. And he does his best—sometimes unsuccessfully—to instill that same sense of purpose and pride in his fellow elephants. What Hathi's trying to do is admirable, and certainly serving in the military is a noble ambition, but he turns the Dawn Patrol into an idol, not a tool.

Read: Psalm 20:7

"Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God."

How to talk to tweens and teens

A lot of what Hathi is trying to instill in his elephant platoon is positive. He talks about the importance of discipline and hard work, but throughout the movie, Hathi loses sight of the bigger picture. Even when he tries to help, his blind pursuit of what the military should be undercuts his mission—and he ends up telling the enemy (Shere Khan) exactly what his Dawn Patrol is doing, where they're going and why. How did Hathi ruin the very thing he'd been training his elephant platoon to do?

What to say to young children

What do you think of Col. Hathi? What could he have done better? *These words are based on 1 John 3:17.*

Movie stop 25:21

Mowgli meets Baloo, whom Bagheera calls a "shiftless, stupid jungle bum." But Baloo thinks that he's the smart one. He doesn't put a lot of work into anything, and he believes that everything will work out just fine—if everyone would simply concentrate on the "bear necessities."

What it is: Epicureanism

Baloo believes that the problem with the world is that folks work too hard. Why? Because they want too much. If you want only what you need, you'll be much happier. "You'll forget about your worries and your strife," he sings. Epicurus—a philosopher from ancient Greece—likely would have agreed. Though he was probably a little more thoughtful than Baloo, he believed that people should squeeze out all the pleasure they can from life. And the best sort of pleasure, he believed, is to be free from anxiety.

Read: Proverbs 21:17

"Whoever loves pleasure will be a poor man; he who loves wine and oil will not be rich."

How to talk to tweens and teens

Baloo might look at Proverbs 21:17 and say, "Hey, that's OK. I'm not trying to be rich." He believes that nature will provide everything he needs. There's some truth in Baloo's philosophy: We don't want to get caught up in chasing after material wealth. Even the Bible tells us, "Do not be anxious about anything" (Philippians 4:6). Yet it also says to present our needs to God "by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving." Baloo believes that *nature* will provide for his needs, but the Bible clearly tells us that *God* will provide. What needs are you anxious about? What helps you give your worries to God and trust Him to provide for your needs?

What to say to young children

It's good not to be worried about things, but it's also good to work and plan more than Baloo does. What do you think would happen to Mowgli if he followed Baloo's philosophy in the jungle without Baloo there to protect him? *These words are based on Proverbs 16:9.*

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II movie messages: *The Jungle Book*, animated (1967)

Movie stop 32:30

King Louie sends a troop of monkeys to snatch Mowgli from Baloo and carry him away to a ruined temple, where the king is waiting for him.

What it is: Absolute Monarchy

King Louie has it pretty good. He tells Mowgli that he's the "king of the swingers" and the "jungle VIP," but does he use his power wisely? Louie obviously likes to be king, and yet he doesn't do much for his followers. Instead, he wants to be even more powerful by learning the secret of "man's red flower"—fire. Louie thinks Mowgli can get this for him because Mowgli is human.

Read: Psalm 2:10

"Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth."

How to talk to tweens and teens

Being a king isn't a bad thing. There were some good kings in the Bible. But there were some very bad kings, too. When we look at King Louie, we discover part of the reason why kings go bad. He's not particularly wise or good. He is, however, especially selfish. And that selfishness—which leads him to kidnap Mowgli—ultimately ruins the temple where he lives. What might your selfishness ruin?

What to say to young children

King Louie wants to be like Mowgli. Why do you think he wants that? Have you ever wanted to be more like someone else? Always remember that God has given you unique and wonderful gifts. You don't need to be like anyone else. *These words are based on James 3:14-16.*

Movie stop 42:17

Baloo and Bagheera rescue Mowgli from King Louie and his troop of monkeys, and Bagheera tries to convince Baloo that the "man cub" needs to be taken to the man village, where he belongs. Baloo resists until Bagheera mentions Shere Khan, the tiger. "He hates man with a vengeance," Bagheera tells him. "You know that." And Shere Khan won't stop until he kills Mowgli.

What it is: Misanthropism

Misanthropy literally means "hatred of humankind." Since most misanthropes are human beings, this worldview seems a little ironic. But as a tiger, Shere Khan feels no such irony. He hates humankind, and he doesn't care who knows it. Why? Because they pose a threat to him. And fear drives him to kill any human who crosses his path. Human misanthropes often hate their fellow humans for the same reasons: They're afraid of people and see them as a threat, so they lash out in violent ways.

Read: Proverbs 10:12

"Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses."

How to talk to tweens and teens

Mowgli doesn't want to hurt Shere Khan. He just wants to live in the jungle and get along with everyone. But the tiger is convinced that Mowgli is dangerous, and he won't listen to anyone who says otherwise. As Bagheera says, "No one explains *anything* to Shere Khan." Even though most of us aren't misanthropic like Shere Khan, we can slip into the same trap. We can judge people based on their outward appearance or assume they want to hurt us. Using good judgment is important when you're dealing with people, but it's even more important to show grace and kindness. How have you fallen into the misanthropy trap? Whom do you need to show more grace and kindness to?

What to say to young children

Shere Khan hates Mowgli because he's a man cub. But he doesn't really know who Mowgli is. If Shere Khan spent time getting to know Mowgli, do you think his opinion would change? *These words are based on John 7:24.*

Movie stop 55:35

Mowgli flees from Baloo and runs straight into Kaa, the snake. Kaa pretends to sympathize with Mowgli and his plight, and he even offers to help. "I can see to it that you never have to leave this jungle," he says. And then Kaa starts singing, "Trust in me," hypnotizing Mowgli with his soothing voice.

What it is: Machiavellianism

Machiavelli was a 16th-century philosopher who observed that those who conquer their enemies with deception tend to be honored more than the ones who conquer by force. Kaa is a true Machiavellian who doesn't mind lying or misleading to get what he wants. And the only thing he wants is Mowgli in his tummy.

Read: Romans 16:17-18

"I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive."

How to talk to tweens and teens

Kaa is like another lying serpent who spun his own lies in the Garden of Eden. Kaa has plenty of company from people who seek to lead others astray. Kaa tells Mowgli, "Trust in me, just in me." But the Bible advises us to weigh the words and deeds of people who think they know what we should or shouldn't do. Is there a Kaa in your life?

What to say to young children

Kaa is sneaky, but people can be sneaky, too. If someone is telling you to do something you think could be wrong, go straight to your parents and let them know. Do you know anyone like Kaa? *These words are based on 2 Peter 2:1.*

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⏸ movie messages: *The Jungle Book*, animated (1967)

Movie stop 1:00:35

Mowgli realizes that Kaa lied to him, and the boy tells him so. Kaa angrily replies, "It's like you said. You can't trust *anyone.*"

What it is: Cynicism

Kaa goes to some philosophical extremes in the span of five minutes. First, he wants Mowgli to "trust in me, just in me." But then, when his lie is revealed, he cynically tells Mowgli, "You can't trust anyone." We can adopt this worldview ourselves if we're hurt or lied to. When we trust someone and then find out he or she is not trustworthy, we may stop trusting everyone. But the Bible reminds us to put our trust in God and His Word first, and to be wise when trusting people. If someone's words and deeds line up with what God says is true, we can trust the person to a point. But God is always trustworthy, and we can put our full trust in Him.

Read: Proverbs 3:5-6

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

How to talk to tweens and teens

Proverbs 3:5-6 is an important Scripture to remember. Kaa says we shouldn't trust anyone, and the Bible cautions us against trusting in ourselves. But we can trust God in everything because He alone is trustworthy. That doesn't mean we should be cynical about everyone and everything, as Kaa suggests. It just means we need to be wise and careful about where we place our trust. Are you becoming cynical? How can you trust God in this area?

What to say to young children

The Bible says you can always trust God. And you can trust your parents, even though they will sometimes make mistakes. Unlike Kaa, most parents want what's best for their kids and will never intentionally lead them into danger. *These words are based on Ephesians 6:1.*

Movie stop 1:07:45

Shere Khan finds Mowgli and gives the man cub a head start in fleeing from him. "It makes the chase more interesting—for me," he says. But before Shere Khan can go after Mowgli, Baloo bounds in and grabs the tiger by the tail. "Run, Mowgli, run!" he yells.

What it is: Altruism

It's interesting that *The Jungle Book* begins with Bagheera thinking about walking away from the orphaned man cub, and it ends with Baloo's sacrificial act of bravery. As the story repeatedly illustrates, the jungle encourages us to be selfish. Everyone in the jungle runs from Shere Khan, and the tiger makes sure Mowgli knows it. But Baloo leaps in to save the child, even though it might well mean his death. What Baloo shows is the highest form of altruism.

Read: John 15:13

"Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."

How to talk to tweens and teens

This Bible verse was more or less quoted in *The Jungle Book* as Bagheera and Mowgli mourn Baloo, who they believe sacrificed his life for the man cub. Baloo winds up being just fine, but that doesn't mean we should overlook his courage. Acts of altruism aren't limited to Christians, but the fact that Bagheera quotes Scripture emphasizes how central that approach is to our faith. Where do you see altruism in your world?

What to say to young children

Baloo was very brave to do what he did. Would you have been as brave if you were Baloo? Does his sacrifice for Mowgli remind you of another sacrifice that Someone made for us? *These words are based on Ephesians 5:2.*

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